

Reading Lines: Stopping Negative Thinking

Changing Negative to Positive Thinking

- **Man:** “Let’s go to a movie on Friday night. I want to see the new suspense thriller.”
- **Woman:** “I don’t like scary movies. I would rather go to a romantic comedy or something else instead.”
- **Man:** “No. You can’t get your way all the time. I should get to choose where we go. I have been working hard all week, and I deserve to go where I want to go.”
- **Woman:** “Let’s not argue about it now. We can decide what to do tomorrow after you get home from work.”

Discuss - *What was his situation/trigger?*

What Are Some Negative, Neutral, and Positive Thoughts?

- **Negative** – “Why does she always get her way? I’m the one who pays the bills around here. She’s trying to control me.”
- **Neutral** – “Maybe we can come up with another plan. I don’t want to argue about it. We’ll talk about it later.”
- **Positive** – “I’m glad she trusts me enough to tell me how she feels. I don’t want either one of us to be scared or uncomfortable when we go out to a movie. I want it to be fun.”

Changing negative thinking to positive thinking does not mean you are letting other people control you – You are just choosing a better option.

Listen to each other before over-reacting - (the next evening after work)

- **Woman** – “I made you your favorite supper tonight. I hope you like it.”
- **Man** – “That is nice. The pot roast is really good.”
- **Woman** – “What should we do after supper?”

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- **Man** – “I still want to see a movie tonight. I’ve had a rough week at work, and I need to wind down.”
- **Woman** – “Before we decide where to go, tell me what is going on at work. Maybe you will feel better after we talk.”

Discuss - *What was his situation/trigger?*

What Are Some Negative, Neutral, and Positive Thoughts?

- **Negative** – “She can’t control me that easily. I still deserve to do what I want to do tonight, no matter how nice she acts.”
- **Neutral** – “The movie is not important enough to argue about. I could go with my friends sometime.”
- **Positive** – “I like spending time with her and talking. This is a good chance to build our relationship. It might even be better than going to watch that movie.”
- “After supper, we can either watch a movie on TV, or go to see a different movie that we both like.”

What is an example of a negative feeling you had?

What was the trigger event that may have caused it?

How can you have less negative thinking and more positive thinking?